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SUBJECT Restrictions Placed on KGB

PATRICK MCGRATH: There was talk in Moscow today about storming and tearing apart the headquarters of the KGB. It hasn't happened yet. But as Channel 5's Tom Hendrick reports, there were dramatic developments that promise to change the face of the still-feared secret police.

TOM HENDRICK: The KGB, Communist agents spoofed by Hollywood and feared by Soviet citizens for decades as the deadly enforcer of dictatorship, is no more. Today an official ban made it illegal for the KGB to be an instrument of the party. And to make sure the ban is enforced, Russian prosecutors invaded the inner sanctums of the secret police headquarters to search through records. It's estimated up to six million secret informers stand to be exposed.

STANISLAV LEVCHENKO: So, KGB will not give up that easily at all.

HENDRICK: Stan Levchenko should know. He was a KGB Major before defecting to the U.S. ten years ago and believes it's going to take a long time before the agency is brought within the law.

LEVCHENKO: I have that [unintelligible]. Even now. Yes.

HENDRICK: Why?

LEVCHENKO: KGB is a very vengeful organization.

HENDRICK: But the appointment of Vadim Bakatin as the KGB's new chief was seen as another positive development.

GEORGE CARVER [Center for Strategic Studies]: This is the first time you will have had as the head of the KGB someone who is not a Communist Party apparatchik and who is not a security services professional. It is the beginning of some very fundamental changes in structure, in mission, in function, and above all in accountability.

HENDRICK: Some said today's moves to rid the country of the dreaded KGB made it the equivalent of the Bastille Day in France or the U.S. Fourth of July.

Short of another coup, it's not likely to be the KGB of old anymore. And the country is celebrating. Realizing at the same time that the transition from police state to free state is not complete.

Tom Hendrick, Fox News.